

EQUINE VIRAL ENCEPHALITIS

What is the cause?

A togavirus, disease confined to the west hemisphere, covers four recognised diseases, Venezuelan Equine Encephalitis, Western EE, Eastern EE and Japanese EE.

How is it Spread?

The virus is spread from horse to horse by biting flies and insects.

What are the signs of disease in the Horse?

- Fever
- Sensitivity to sound, irritability and adverse changes in behaviour
- Drowsiness
- Inco-ordination
- Paralysis
- Death (EEE has upto 90% death rate)

How is the disease diagnosed?

Blood tests to identify antibodies to the virus.

How can we prevent the disease?

Control of the insect vectors to help prevent the spread between horses.
Testing of horses being imported into the country from endemic areas.
Vaccines are available but none licensed for use in Europe.